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ABSTRACT

This 1983 annual report of the Scottish Environmental Education Committee (SEEC) provides summaries about: (1) committee membership; (2) the annual SEEC conference; (3) SEEC committee structure; (4) the development of an environmental education information service; (5) publications; (6) links with formal education; (7) links with other organizations; and (8) finances. A separate report on the SEEC annual conference (March 12, 1983) is included in an appendix; in addition to highlighting conference proceedings and listing SEEC goals, this report presents in tabular form the cases for and against four curriculum innovation strategies (infusion of existing subject disciplines, separate identifiable modules, new subject areas, and ethos of school and society). (JN)

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Scottish Environmental Education Committee

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Annual Report 1983

SE 045 299

SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT FOR 1983

During 1983 a determined effort has been made by the Committee to improve both its structure and the effectiveness of its activities. The following report summarises the main events in the committee's year.

Membership

Sadly the committee lost one of its founding members, and a guiding influence on its development, by the early death of Mr. J. Russell Thomson. He will be greatly missed. Mr. Richard Close resigned due to ill-health and the committee wishes him a good recovery and happy retirement.

Mr. Nicholas Cooke (Director, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Scotland) and Mr. Roger Wheater (Director, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland) joined the committee.

Conference

The annual conference was held on 12th March at Moray House College of Education, Edinburgh, and the committee is greatly indebted to the College and in particular to Mr. Tom Masterton and his staff for the excellent organization which was provided. The opportunity was taken to review the state of environmental education among the organizations in correspondence with the committee, to guide the further course of the committee's development. A discussion paper on the Committee's future and a draft constitution were circulated to participants, and while less time was available than had been intended for discussion of these, there was general agreement that the committee should move along the lines suggested, and this it has done.

The leading speakers in the morning were Professor Aubrey Manning, Professor of Natural History, University of Edinburgh on "The Need for Environmental Education in our Current Social and Economic Condition", Mr. A.G. Nicolson, Assistant Principal Jordanhill College of Education, on "The Role of SEEC in Promoting Environmental Education", and Professor J.C. Smyth on "The Current Proposals for Development". Many examples of workin progress by organizations participating in the meeting were on display, and in the afternoon Miss Janis Kidston and Mr. Nicholas Cooke (BTCV), Mr. Julian Hill (Workers' Educational Association

Tutor/Organizer for Argyll and Bute) and Dr. Richard Fawcett (Ancient Monuments Division, Scottish Development Department) gave presentations on their own particular activities in this field. Mr. Roger Wheater gave a final assessment of the day's proceedings, which is reproduced as an appendix to this report.

Committee Structure

One of the main recommendations for development of the committee was the formation of sub-committees, to undertake particular activities and to enlarge the number of people actively involved in the committee's work. Four have been set up during the year - a Business Committee (already in existence at the time of the Conference), an Information and Publicity Committee, a Development Committee and a Finance Committee. Their present membership is given in Appendix 2. Most of the items reported below stem from the work of these sub-committees.

Information

The need for an information resource and service on environmental education in Scotland has long been recognised by the committee and, as reported to the conference, an arrangement was reached last year with the Council for Environmental Education (CEE) to collaborate in developing the service which they already provide for England and Wales. The Scottish contribution has been to undertake (along with Paisley College) the transfer of the information resource (some 5000 items at present) to computer file, thus improving the service for both organizations and laying a foundation for further development. Staff for this operation have been provided through the Manpower Services Commission, some equipment has been provided by SEEC through the generosity of a private trust and the remainder is on loan from Paisley College, which has also provided supervision and much expert advice. Seven organizations have also contributed to this by becoming early subscribing members of SEEC to provide for the formal link with CEE, and to those we are especially grateful.

The transfer will shortly be completed and plans are being made for its extension particularly by the incorporation of more Scottish material which will now be collected; for this we shall seek the cooperation of all who have something to offer of resources, experience or practical help, and ask our correspondents that if questionnaires come their way they will take the time to complete and return them. Means must also be designed for making the resource available to those who can use it, and much will depend on the support which we receive through subscribing membership.

Publications

Several suggestions have been made for publications from the committee and these are under consideration. One in particular is already in preparation: this is a review of the developments in environmental education which have taken place in Scotland in the ten years which have almost elapsed since publication of the Gilbert Report. Compilers of particular sections have been recruited but aid will be sought from many people active in the field and we hope that they will respond quickly, to make the review as comprehensive as possible, and ready for publication to mark the tenth anniversary of the original report.

We hope that Scotland will increasingly offer material for publication in the CEE publications, REED and the CEE Newsheet, to which subscribing members of SEEC will be entitled as a part of the return for their subscription.

Links with Formal Education

The committee is one of the interested bodies to which the Scottish Examination Board sends new materials for comment, in subjects relevant to the environmental field. The committee has responded in the past year to four of these. Believing that its role should be active as well as reactive it is now consulting about ways of contributing positively to curriculum development. This might, for example, include the construction of modules for use in the actively growing 16-18 programme.

In the meantime the committee has given support to work already in progress. In particular it backed the teaching model for interdisciplinary environmental education units produced and tested by the Strathclyde group which is now being prepared for publication by the Scottish Curriculum Development Service, following wider consultations concerning its applicability. It has also taken notice of the successful series of workshops held by the same group on the use of the model in adult and community education, from which more may be expected.

Links with other Organizations

Many contacts have been made, and discussions taken place, with other organizations concerned in environmental education. Our links with the CEE are strong and healthy, and we have had much encouragement from the Director and his staff. The committee made its contribution to the educational section of the UK response to the World Conservation Strategy, launched in June, and this will also be the subject of its 1984 conference. It was also invited to respond to the Nature Conservancy Council's strategy proposals for conservation, and did so with reference to

educational aspects. It has discussed with representatives of the Scottish branch of the Institute of Biology the possibility of a joint conference, and also a special function to form part of the forthcoming meeting in Glasgow of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Other contacts have led to the drafting of a project on Energy and Housing for which MSC support may be sought and to discussions concerning the production of TV programmes and audio-visual materials.

Contacts are not confined to other Scottish or UK bodies. We have a strong link with the Commission on Education of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), especially its North West Europe Committee with which some collaboration is possible, and we are in correspondence with other international and overseas organizations and individuals. This may prove particularly relevant to treatment of some of the current problems which do not recognize national boundaries - acid deposition being a topical example.

Finance

The committee has obtained from time to time grants for specific projects from charitable trust funds, together with MSC support already referred to, but otherwise it has been dependent on the voluntary effort of its members and the back-up that they may receive from their own organizations. For development commensurate with the scale of the need this is not adequate, even with the addition of income from subscriptions if this measure is approved. The Finance Committee is the most recently established, and will be exploring possibilities for expanding income. In the meantime discussions are taking place with the relevant departments of the Scottish Office to establish how application for support from that quarter should be directed.

Conclusion

The year in retrospect has seen a lot of activity and much more is in prospect. We are acutely conscious, however, that it does not meet nearly all the possibilities which have been put to us by people anxious to help and to be involved. Indeed there must be quite a number of correspondents who have been disappointed at the lack or slowness of response which they have experienced from us. This is, alas, the inevitable consequence of what is still an enterprise dependent on the enthusiasm of the already over-committed. Only when we can establish at least a token staff will this situation be likely to improve materially, and place us in a comparable position to our counterpart south of the border.

I would, however, like to take this opportunity of thanking all these same people for their loyalty, their time and their hard work, as committee members and supporters of SEEC objectives. Particularly I would like to thank the Scottish Civic Trust for continuing to look after us and especially Miss Morag Dunn who, as Secretary of the Committee, consistently saves us from relapsing into chaos. With this kind of backing our progress should certainly continue.

J.C. SMYTH.

APPENDIX 1

SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE: A REPORT ON THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, MORAY HOUSE, EDINBURGH, 12TH MARCH, 1983

The SEEC conference succeeded in illustrating three main points. Firstly that the environmental issue is fundamental to our long term future. Secondly that the need for environmental education is a vital one. Thirdly that the constraints on implementing this need are built into our bureaucratic systems, although it was noted that even outside the systems there is a failure to appreciate either the needs or the opportunities.

Professor Aubrey Manning very properly, and in his inimitable way, reminded the meeting that humans are central to the environmental balancing act. It is man's activities in the greedy use of renewable resources and his wasteful use of non-renewable resources that is leading the world into an even more dangerous situation. Over-exploitation affects the possibility of renewal and wasteful use is palpably lunatic. Mis-use of all these resources creates pollution which in its many forms constrains the planned use of renewable resources.

Completely central to the issue is a human population growth which continues unabated in many parts of the world. It is this population growth which creates the demand for ever increasing resources and space.

Although people are now at last listening there is a lack of evidence that they are learning. It is therefore vital that environmental education be taken seriously at all levels, in what might be described as target areas, not just the classroom but the home, boardrooms, unions and the various agencies of Government. It is possibly the recognition that there is not an easy solution, and that the debate will involve social, political and ethical considerations, that prevents the necessary action to implement a meaningful programme of environmental education.

In summing up Professor Manning emphasised that environmental education is about connections: it can be a great synthesiser and an aid to the teaching of a wide diversity of subjects. Although there is every possibility that we might blow ourselves up before we travel to hell in the handcart, it is important that in debating these matters we should be constructive and not harbingers of doom.

Alasdair Nicolson's subject neatly followed Professor Manning's. Having identified the need, how might that need be met by education, and how can environmental education be promoted?

It is recognised that an entry into formal education is vital and such entries should not be just for the young. The aim should be to create for all a background for an intelligent approach to the environment. Alasdair Nicolson reminded everyone that the meeting was being held at the end of a week which had seen the election success of the Green Party in the Federal Republic of Germany, the publication of a United Nations report on the over-use of timber in Africa and the curtailing of some of President Reagan's more dangerous plans for the environment as a result of pressure from ecology bodies.

The talk was built around four questions: "What are we seeking in environmental education?" "Where is it to be found in schools?" "What are the lessons of the last fifteen years?" and "Is there yet a tentative strategy?" All are questions which require answers and various bodies are now trying to provide them. Work on the question of subject linkage is being examined. The IUCN World Conservation Strategy, amongst a number of other important matters, raises the question of the educational implications of the strategy and we in Scotland have had our say in formulating a UK response to this.

The first question may be answered by any of a number of definitions all in substantial agreement. The answer to the second is "Almost everywhere, even when not specifically identified". Most of the activity is, however, informal. A look at the last fifteen years raises a further question: can environmental education become curriculum based? There is pressure for such development, both internationally from UNESCO, and nationally, locally and from schools. The curricular innovation strategies available are as follows:

(a) Infusion of existing subject disciplines
(b) Separate identifiable modules
(c) New subject areas
(d) Ethos of school and society.

Cases were recognised for and against each of these.

The ethics that permeate the school are of course largely determined by climate of public opinion, for which the media are responsible. Public awareness on environmental matters is developing rapidly, but apparently not convincingly enough to bring about the changes needed in the curricula. Thus on the one side is an existing curriculum which by its very structure does not allow for ease of change (both its strength and its weakness). Although elements of environmental matters are covered within existing subjects, because individual disciplines change there is a danger in a lack of coherence in learning. Although team teaching is more adaptable to the needs of

CURRICULAR INNOVATION STRATEGIES

OPTIONS	CASE FOR	CASE AGAINST
"Infusion" of existing subject disciplines.	1. Use existing staff/disciplines/ expertise/resources. 2. Minimise inter-disciplinary/ subject/strife/discord.	1. Individual disciplines change a/c pressure from other areas eg geography/modern studies. 2. Requires complex subject negotiations - point of entry, level of treatment - sequence of study. 3. Problem of "subject" share/responsibility. 4. Lack of coherence in learning terms.
Separate "identifiable" modules.	1. Coherence. 2. Co-operative effort/team teaching possible. 3. More adaptable than longer units. 4. Flexible - responsive to change.	1. Not always suitable for each age group. 2. Appropriately trained staff required to provide balance. 3. Danger of "Bittiness".
"New" subject areas	1. Coherence and progression possible. 2. Introduction of comprehensive approach to appropriate methods/content expected. 3. Flexibly responsive to change and without complex negotiations.	1. Overlap with existing subject content. 2. Serious inter-disciplinary strife possible. 3. Trained specialists inevitably ex-subject based. 4. Exam recognition difficult. 5. May lead to inflexibility in long run - defence of status.
"Ethos" of School/Society etc.	1. Touches all aspects of education formal and informal - "Keep Glasgow Tidy". 2. Possible important spin-off - local/national citizenship. 3. Unity of purpose within school, therefore harmonious development of subject elements taught.	1. No rigorous development of discipline. 2. Coherent teaching not guaranteed. 3. Evaluation more difficult.

environmental education, and much more flexible, there is a danger of bittiness. A fundamental difficulty appears to be that the level of training for environmental education at colleges of education is very low indeed. It was pointed out however that a physical and environmental approach has been included in the replanning of the primary teacher training programme and there seems every likelihood that this change will be accepted.

The more people recognise the need for serious input of environmental matters into our education, the more frustrated they become by the bureaucratic structure which prevents the development of the new subject. The further we go down this road, the more difficult will be our task when the need is recognised.

Nevertheless it was noted that in addition to these structural problems there are the difficulties of overlap of content, inter-disciplinary strife and the position regarding examinations in the subject.

So there are no easy solutions to the development and implementation of environmental education. Big strides were made through rural studies programmes but the disadvantage of a specific origin lies in being specialised, in this case perhaps suggesting that environment is only about countryside or wild places. In the days before Davey Lamps, the miner seeing his canary fall on its back, feet kicking in the air, would remove himself from the mine with all haste. The state of our wild life in its multi-variate forms and locations is like the miner's canary, the monitor to our environmental wellbeing. Such monitors are essential but they are only a part of what people need to understand about our environment.

Looking to the future the point was made that Scotland is not standing still (although some would argue that movement is barely discernible). The 1974 report on Environmental Education stressed the development of an environmental ethic. It is however agreed that you cannot teach people to be pleased with a sunset: you can only provide the opportunity and the place from which to view it. It has to be recognised that the creation of awareness is extremely difficult to evaluate.

Within the existing structures it is important to co-operate with professional and lay people who have related concerns, and with statutory and voluntary bodies (e.g. the Forestry Commission, the Scottish Civic Trust, Keep Britain Tidy) to help co-ordinate environmental outlets. This should be an important function of SEEC. Through discussion with these bodies whose membership includes people with many different perspectives, a much more positive approach towards environmental education can be achieved. Since commitment of a curriculum body is essential

for development SEEC should also establish a relationship with the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum and the Scottish Examination Board. Many new schemes are in preparation e.g. the 16 - 18 programme, a development which is fast moving and provides a modular approach to environmental education. Resources must be sought, however, for curriculum change, either from the local authorities or from SED. SEEC should also work in conjunction with the private sector, particularly that concerned with non-formal education in both testing and evaluating programmes.

Professor Smyth then introduced the proposals for the further development of SEEC to meet the needs which had been identified by the morning speakers. Time was not available to discuss in detail Jean Forbes' discussion paper but it was agreed that SEEC now required to develop a much more formal structure if real influence was to be achieved. It was felt important that SEEC should develop in a similar way to the Council for Environmental Education in England and Wales. Support was needed for the development of a more innovative role in the promotion of environmental education projects and events. In view of the lack of time participants were asked to study the discussion paper and to contact SEEC with their reactions.

In the short debate, emphasis was laid on the opportunities presented by the 16 - 18 development. Although matters were moving slowly forward it was wondered if there was time for the current slow rate of evolution.

It is clear that the problems are very visible; what is not yet clear is how these difficulties may best be tackled and a reconstructed SEEC role to examine this is vital.

In the afternoon Nicholas Cooke of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers started the session by describing some of the work currently being undertaken in environmental education, in particular the practical conservation work being carried out with four schools in the Castlemilk District of Glasgow. The teacher/child involvement in exercises of this kind was a most effective element. The projects at Castlemilk were pilot ones enabling evaluation leading to further modifications and development to take place.

The trust is certainly providing a support service in the very important urban fringe and thus operating in one of the target areas identified by an earlier speaker. The value of the Environmental Resources Centre in Edinburgh was also pointed out by the speaker. The BTCV is able to help other conservation bodies implement practical programmes of management. It is hoped that organizations like the Scottish Wildlife Trust which is currently discussing its educational role will look at the

environmental education potential of its reserves and how such developments might be assisted by the use of organizations like BTCV. It seems that the BTCV policy of planning and implementation through discussion with those involved is a most practical way of achieving the highest potential from the areas concerned. These resources are valuable and in the future will become more so as work per se takes up less time in a person's working life. The opportunity for a multi-disciplinary approach to the practical problems that have been identified are greater than ever before.

Julian Hill followed with an interesting insight into the work of the Workers' Education Association. He confirmed the earlier statement regarding the greater availability of people wanting to increase their knowledge and those seeking to find ways of putting such knowledge to practical use.

The lesson from this contribution and that of the final speaker, Dr. Fawcett of the Ancient Monuments Division of the Scottish Development Department, was that here were two organizations both involved with teaching, structured and unstructured, with opportunities in environmental education terms as yet largely untapped. These organizations would certainly be targets for developing education in environmental terms that a more innovative SEEC should be identifying.

The conference closed on the understanding that the challenges were considerable and could only be effectively met with a co-ordinated approach. It was important that the speed of cultural evolution be faced to ensure success within the limited time available. In a recent address to the Council for Environmental Education Max Nicholson made two points which were of particular relevance to to-day's conference. "We have all been taught to look upon education as the vanguard to civilization, but environmentalists who have successfully taken on such formidable adversaries as Governments, Nuclear Board Authorities, multi-national oil and tanker operators and many more can not be blamed for asking why must our vanguard straggle along so far in our rear!"

His second point reminded Council of what he had said some six years earlier: "Despite the existence of the necessary large activist forces in the conservation movement, they had not yet been led to see the key significance of environmental education and to put their strength behind this expansion."

It is to be hoped that the important issues brought out in the conference and so succinctly put by Max Nicholson can be successfully tackled in the years to come.

R.J. WHEATER.

THE TASK OF SEEC (A Summary by A.G.Nicolson)

1. To seek for resources and an information scheme so that the Scottish Environmental Education Council can be seen to be a body which provides some kind of service.

2. We require urgently co-operation with all kinds of conservation and voluntary bodies on a permanent basis.

3. The need to urge urban/rural co-operation and to avoid the possibility of discreet groups developing.

4. We require urgently to prepare teachers at an early stage if possible at pre service training for the environmental ethic.

5. The Council requires to make an urgent approach to the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum (CCC) to give full information to CCC about our links, about our reports and about the information service which we are preparing.

6. The university, colleges of education, conservation groups, regional planners should be urged to encourage participation of staff and students at all levels in environmental matters. This can be done through the ethos approach, which is an essential prerequisite for further development.

7. The Council might well consider the preparation of modules or short courses which through the work of members of the committee or council might lead to a systematic approach to the environment. The primary education side is essential here; the secondary side we regard as difficult, but with the strategy outlined it might be possible to see a way forward. At all costs we have to avoid some of the serious hostility which developed in England over the last 18 years and attempt perhaps a more modest way at the primary/secondary level of formal education to prepare teachers and pupils for at least an introduction to systematic environmental education.

APPENDIX 2

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE, MARCH, 1984

Professor J.C. Smyth,Department of Biology, Paisley College, High Street,Paisley PA1 2BE (Chairman)
Miss Jean Forbes, Department of Town & Regional Planning, Adam Smith Building, University of Glasgow. G12 8RT (Vice-Chairman)
Miss Morag Dunn, The Scottish Civic Trust, 24 George Square, Glasgow. G2 1EF (Secretary)
J.D. Baines, Esq., Director,Council for Environmental Education, School of Education, University of Reading, London Road, Reading RG1 5AQ
R.K. Butler, Esq., Countryside Commission for Scotland, Battleby, Redgorton, Perth PH1 3EW (Observer)
Nicholas Cooke, Esq., Director (Scotland), British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, 70 Main Street, Doune, Perthshire
Professor J.T. Coppock, Department of Geography, The University of Edinburgh, High School Yards, Edinburgh EH1 1NR
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John R. Hume,Esq., Department of History, University of Strathclyde, McCance Building, 16 Richmond Street, Glasgow. G1 1XQ
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Professor Aubrey Manning, Department of Zoology, The University of Edinburgh, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JT
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Gordon Wilson, Esq., Shawlands Academy, Moss-Side Road, Glasgow.

SUB-COMMITTEES are still undergoing development. The following people are involved in addition to members of the main committee:

Mrs. Ann Black (Adviser in Primary Education, Glasgow Division) - F
James Carson, Esq., (Adviser in Geography, Glasgow Division) - F
Eric Caulton, Esq., (Biological Sciences Department, Napier College) - IP
David Chalmers, Esq., (Assistant Principal Teacher of Outdoor Education, West Calder High School) - IP
Miss Irene Clark (Scottish Community Education Council) - IP
Dr. D.J. Curtis (Paisley College) - IP
I.G.R. Jolley, Esq. - F
Charles Viddie, Esq., (Adviser, Tayside Regional Council) - IP
Dr. Tim Mitchell (Royal Town Planning Institute, Scottish Branch) - IP
Clive Morgan, Esq., (Glasgow College of Technology) - D
Mrs. Frances Noble (Jordanhill College) - D
Mrs. Edwina Proudfoot (Council for British Archaeology in Scotland) - D
Alex. Stirling, Esq., (Adviser in Modern Studies, Glasgow Division) - F
Ian Watson, Esq., (Rector, Woodmill High School, Dunfermline) - IP
Graham White, Esq., (Environmental Resource Centre, Edinburgh) - IP
David Wilson, Esq., (Glasgow District Council, Landscape Section of Parks Department). - D

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